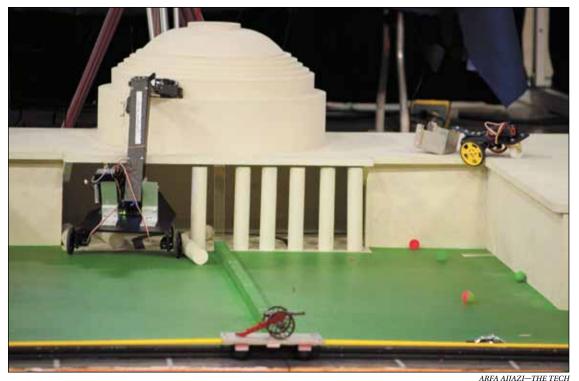
MIT's Oldest and Largest Newspaper



WEATHER, p. 2 SAT: 65°F | 48°F Chance of showers SUN: 61°F | 47°F Partly cloudy

tech.mit.edu Volume 131, Number 25 Friday, May 6, 2011

Robots can be hackers, too



The theme of this year's 2.007 (Design and Manufacturing I) competition was "MIT's Greatest Hacks" in honor of the Institute's 150th anniversary. The four tasks that the teams' robots had to complete were placing a police car on the dome, pulling the Caltech cannon, dropping five bouncing balls, and inflating a weather balloon on the Harvard football field

Engagement on Walker continues GSC says interaction improved

By Stan Gill STAFF REPORTER

The relationship between student groups in Walker Memorial and the administration has improved in the past few months with the formation of the Walker Memorial Assessment Team. In late March, the Graduate Student Council Task Force on Walker Memorial formally joined with the administration to form the team, chaired by Associate Provost Martin A. Schmidt PhD '88. Representatives from the Undergraduate Association, the Music and Theater Arts faculty, Dean of Student Life Costantino Colombo, Dean of Graduate Student Education Christine Ortiz, and several faculty support staff are also part of the coalition.

The team was formed in response to concerns from student groups who may have to be relocated under a plan to transform

Walker Memorial into the home of MIT's Music and Theater Arts (MTA) program.

Since its formation, the assessment team has been having weekly meetings. They have finished the process of gathering the data they need from student groups with interests in Walker and are now in the midst of analyzing the data so they can properly assess how relocations may occur should the repurposing go forward.

'We're in the process of taking the temperature of each organization." Schmidt said, "We really want to capture the strong feelings of each organization and really make this an interactive process."

The quality of communication between the affected student groups and the administration seems to have greatly improved since the team has been formed. Every student group that requested a direct meeting with the adminis-

Walker, Page 12

End-of-term regulations remain unchanged

A motion to bring end-of-term academic regulations for graduate courses in line with those for undergraduate course was voted down at the April 20 faculty meeting. The motion proposed changes to Sections 2.52, 2.53, and 2.54 of the Rules and Regulations of the Faculty, which address regulations for final examinations and assignments after the last class date. Sections 2.53 and 2.54 differentiate between undergraduate and graduate coursework regulations, respectively. The motion was sponsored by Adam Albright, chair of the Committee on Curricula; Stephen C. Graves, chair of the Committee on Graduate Programs; and Steven R. Hall '80, chair of the Committee on the Undergradu-

During the March faculty meeting, Albright explained that instructors have always raised questions about tests and assignments due during the last week of classes and that the regulations are worded somewhat differently for undergraduate and graduate situations. The motion aimed to clarify the rules and resolve the differences in language for undergraduate and graduate regulations.

While the motion received the majority of the votes, it failed to receive the 30 votes needed to amend the rules and regulations. As a result, the motion did not pass.

Among those who opposed the motion was JoAnne Yates, deputy dean of the Sloan School of Management. "Rules governing undergrad courses are designed to protect students from having too many deliverables or any tests in the last week of class," Yates said in an email to The Tech. "I believe these protections are appropriate for undergraduates, but not necessary for graduate students."

Yates also had concerns that the changes would restrict the options of faculty and graduate students in designing end of the term coursework.

-Derek Chang

T stop's *Pythagoras* is back

Kendall Band Society completes 13 mo. repair

By Joanna Kao STAFF REPORTER

The familiar sound of bells has been resurrected at the Kendall T Station after a 13-month restoration effort of Pythagoras by the MIT Kendall Band Preservation Society. The swinging set of aluminum chimes - controlled via handles mounted on the walls of the station — was created by local artist Paul Matisse for the station 23 years ago. It deteriorated to the point where the platform controls became dysfunctional in 2007 due to wear and tear.

The idea for the restoration project began in the summer of 2009 when Seth Parker, a resident of Newton, contacted Clarise E. Snyder, the concert director of the Music and Theater Arts department, asking who would be able to fix the art piece. Noting the suitability of MIT students for the task, Snyder said, "I immediately thought it was a good match," adding, "I thought that students here would probably be very interested in getting involved."

Snyder emailed music groups and found several interested students and a faculty member, Course III Technical Instructor Michael J. Tarkanian '00, to oversee the project. "I was a student here, so I've seen the sculpture over the years, and I thought it would be something cool to work on," Tarkanian said. Together, Tarkanian and the core group of students formed the MIT Kendall Band Preservation Society.

The team took down the handles on the platform in April 2010, and during the summer they spent two days taking down the bells and hammers between the

Pythagoras, Page 13

Smile, MIT! You're on the Mood Meter

Media Lab initiative aims to analyze the level of happiness on campus

Are MIT students happier on Fridays? Do midterms prevent students from smiling? Does the weather influence the mood of the campus?

The Media Lab's Mood Meters, which use four displays across campus to gauge the mood of people passing by, aim to answer these questions. Part of the MIT150 Festival of Arts, Science, and Technology (FAST), the Mood Meters analyze the number and intensity of smiles at MIT through an aggregate of facial expression data received via cameras at the four installations. The first Mood Meter went live on April 6 on the third floor of the Media Lab, and since then three more have been installed in

and the Student Center.

The masterminds of the project are Javier Hernandez G and M. Ehsan Hoque G, two graduate students in the Media Lab's Affective Computing Group. Hoque and Hernandez's research focuses on computing emotion and developing technologies that raise awareness of certain affective (emotional) states. FAST provided the two graduate students with support and the opportunity to showcase different elements of their research by placing their work "in the wild," Hoque said.

Although those who interact with the exhibit may try to display sad expressions, all emotions besides happy are simply registered as neutral. The in-

the Infinite Corridor, the Stata Center, ventors said that, while they could have made the Mood Meters recognize other expressions, both agreed that they wanted to "cheer up the whole mood of MIT," according to Hernandez.

People playing with the meter by intentionally cracking a smile or placing pictures in front of the camera are unlikely to affect the results of the project. Though they could create an algorithm to filter out such readings, both Hernandez and Hoque say they are currently interested in seeing the mood of MIT as people interact with the exhibits and as the MIT community becomes more familiar with the technology. To further encourage interaction, they have made

Mood Meters, Page 11

IN SHORT

Today is the last day for tests in all undergraduate classes. It is also the last day for assignments and tests in all classes with final exams. End-of-term regulations can be found at http://web.mit.edu/faculty/ teaching/termregs.html; violations can be reported at http:// violations.mit.edu/.

FAST Light, the culmination of the Festival or Art, Science, and Technology, will take place tomorrow and Sunday in the evening. The event will feature light and sound exhibitions along the Charles.

Memorial Drive will be

closed between Ames St. and Mass. Ave. from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. both tomorrow and Sunday. Parking will also be prohibited along the section on both days from 12 noon to 11:30 p.m.

Nathaniel C. Thomas '11 has been awarded the Marshall **Scholarship**, which allows him to study in the U.K. for two years. Thomas will be studying mathematics at the University of Cambridge beginning this

Sunday is Mother's Day. Make sure to call your mother!

Send news information and tips to news@tech.mit.edu.

IS SYRIA LIKE LIBYA?

And does the global community have a double standard? OPINION, p. 4

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?

Sort of, but now we need to get out of Afghanistan. OPINION, p. 4

MULTI-TALENTED

We chat with writer/director/actor/artist Miranda July. ARTS, p. 9



BALLET AT ITS FINEST

Bella Figura is pure beauty and well worth the trip off campus.

ARTS, p. 9

A LITTLE TOO **UNNATURAL**

These mice seem to get crazier every issue. FUN, p. 8

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World & Nation . . . 2

Syria steps up arrests and raids in Damascus suburbs

BEIRUT — Syrian security forces raided a restive Damascus suburb on Thursday, going house to house and arresting scores of men in a broad campaign that activists and U.S. officials say represents a new chapter in the crackdown on the country's uprising against four decades of authoritarian rule.

Backed by tanks, the forces swept through hundreds of houses in Saqba, an impoverished town on the capital's outskirts that was the scene of a sprawling demonstration last week against the government of President Bashar Assad, who inherited power from his father, Hafez, in 2000. Human rights groups put the number of arrests there at 286 and said security forces were broadly focusing on men between the ages of

Activists described the arrests as part of a campaign of intimidation that represents the government's latest attempt to stanch seven weeks of unrest. The campaign of arrests appears to have escalated in the past two weeks, and U.S. officials suggested it might backfire as the protests build on momentum gathered over successive Fridays.

-Anthony Shadid, The New York Times

Bill Clinton urges New York to legalize same-sex marriage

ALBANY, N.Y. — Bill Clinton, who as president signed legislation prohibiting federal recognition of same-sex marriages but has in recent years become a supporter of them, called Thursday for New York state lawmakers to pass a measure allowing gay couples to wed.

"For more than a century, our Statue of Liberty has welcomed all kinds of people from all over the world yearning to be free," Clinton, a resident of Westchester County, said. "In the 21st century, I believe New York's welcome must include marriage equality."

Clinton's statement was released by the Human Rights Campaign, a gay-rights group, as part of a campaign to highlight support for same-sex marriage by well-known New Yorkers. The campaign has released video endorsements of the legislation by the actress Julianne Moore, the former Police Commissioner William J. Bratton, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, and the musician Russell Simmons, among others.

-Nicholas Confessore, The New York Times

Earnings and subscribers rise for DirecTV and Cablevision

Two major television distributors, DirecTV and Cablevision, reported gains in profit and in overall subscribers Thursday, giving investors more confidence in the continued health of the cable and satellite subscription business.

DirecTV, the largest satellite TV distributor in the United States, reported net income of \$674 million, or 85 cents a share, in the quarter that ended in March, up from \$558 million in the same quarter last year. Cablevision, which has about 3.5 million cable subscribers, reported net income of \$104 million, or 36 cents per share, up from \$74 million.

Earnings for the major distributors this year suggest that the business is stable despite a slight dip in nationwide cable and satellite subscriptions last year. Michael McCormack, a telecom analyst for Nomura Securities, called the business "healthier than expected" for the quarter.

"We believe investors may now begin to turn more positive on the strength of the pay TV business model," McCormack wrote in an analyst report Thursday, contrasting that forecast with the concerns last year that some customers were cutting the cable cord, or at least considering doing so.

-Brian Stelter, The New York Times

Bin Laden raid account, hastily told, proves fluid

By Elisabeth Bumiller THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — On Monday, the Ohama administration said Osama bin Laden had been killed after a firefight with Navy SEAL commandos, and that he had used his wife as a human shield. On Tuesday, the administration said that bin Laden was not armed at all, and that his wife had not been a shield but had rushed her husband's assaulter and was shot in the leg.

On Wednesday, the administration backtracked again. This time it downgraded its initial accounts of a firefight that raged throughout the raid to gunshots fired only at the beginning of the nearly 40-minute operation by bin Laden's courier, who was quickly dispatched by the commandos.

What happened?

In the view of officials from past and present presidencies, it was a classic collision of a White House desire to promote a stunning national security triumph — and feed a ravenous media - while collecting facts from a chaotic military operation on the other side of the world. At the same time, White House officials worked hard to use the facts of the raid to diminish bin Laden's legacy.

"There has never been any intent to deceive or dramatize," a military official said Thursday, asking that he not be named because of ground rules imposed by the Department of Defense. "Everything we put out we really believed to be true at the

Tommy Vietor, a spokesman for the National Security Council, said that as more and more members of the 79-member assault team were debriefed after the raid, revisions inevitably occurred.

"It was the middle of the night, it was a hectic operation in a foreign country, there was gunfire, so people's accounts are clarified over time with more interviews," Vietor said. "What we did was make as much information available to you guys as quickly as we could, and correct mistakes as quickly as we could."

But the shifting narrative may have undermined the accomplishments of the SEAL team and raised

suspicions, particularly in the Arab world, that the U.S. might be trying to conceal some of the facts of the operation, including that bin Laden was unarmed.

"It's had a hugely negative impact," said Ahmed Rashid, a journalist and author who is an expert on the Taliban and radical Islamism. White House officials "were overexcited, obviously," Rashid said.

"Liberal Muslims who are very sympathetic to the death of bin Laden really don't know what to think," he said. "The American story is very confused."

From Europe, even the archbishop of Canterbury weighed in. At a news briefing Thursday, the Most Rev. Rowan Williams said that the killing of an unarmed man left him "uncomfortable" and that "the different versions of events that have emerged in recent days have not done a great deal to help."

Many of the discrepancies at the White House came from the man who has been part of the bin Laden hunt for 15 years, John Brennan, the president's chief counterterrorism

Republicans revise plan to limit consumer protection agency

By Edward Wyatt and Ben Protess THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — After losing a contentious battle last year over creating an agency to protect consumers against deceptive financial products, Republicans are fighting the battle again, determined to rein in the independence and financing of the agency.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has been one of Washington's drawn-out passion plays, featuring bankers and finance companies that want to undermine the agency and have villainized Elizabeth Warren, the hard-edged Harvard professor President Barack Obama picked to start it.

Warren has characterized the fight as one in which opponents are trying to stick "a knife in the ribs of the agency." In a recent interview, she said, "the fight has now shifted. It didn't stop, it just moved from being a fight out in the headlines, out in the middle of the street, to a fight in the back alleys."

But on Thursday, the fight returned to the open as 44 Senate Republicans sent a letter to Obama saying they "will not support the consideration of any nominee, regardless of party affiliation," to direct the bureau until the agency is restructured.

With 44 of 47 Republican senators digging in against the bureau, Democrats would be unable to gather the 60 votes necessary to end a filibuster and bring a vote on a nominee for director of the agency. That leaves the president with the option of a recess appointment, a move that would anger legislators whose support the president is likely to need to tackle other issues, like cutting the deficit and raising the debt ceiling.

Three bills are pending in the House of Representatives to alter the agency's charter, making it easier for other regulators to overturn the bureau's rules and replacing its director with a five-person commission.

"This is about accountability," said Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama, the ranking Republican member of the Senate Banking Committee. "The bureau, as currently structured, lacks any semblance of the checks and balances inherent in the Constitution. Everyone supports consumer protection, but we should never entrust a single person with this much power and public money."

The White House defended the agency's structure, saying it provided "the strongest consumer protections in history."

"The consumer agency's sole mission is to protect American families and provide the tools they need to make smart financial decisions," said Amy Brundage, a White House spokeswoman.

Historic flooding along the Mississippi

By Shaena Berlin STAFF METEOROLOGIST

To add to the torrent of tragic and destructive weather that has afflicted the southern half of the country over the past few weeks, the Mississippi River now is flooding. Affecting thousands of people spanning the corridor from Illinois to Louisiana, the river continues to swell due to unceasing rain and upstream

snowmelt. In order to protect populated areas, Army engineers already destroyed some levees downstream to release excess water, immersing vast expanses of farmland.

Here in Cambridge, we have experienced extremely pleasant weather over the past week, with several days of sun and little rain. The good weather looks to continue for the next few days, with no major storms likely.

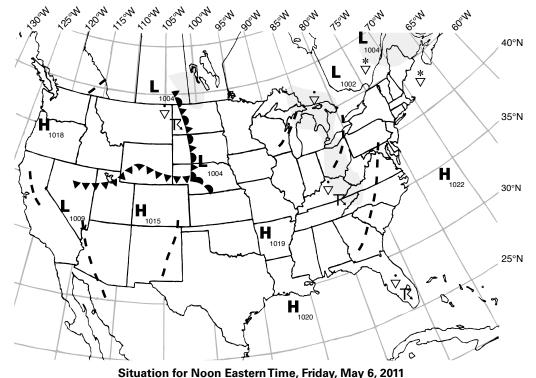
Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny and breezy, with W winds around 20 mph. High 70°F (21°C).

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a slight chance of rain showers. Low 50°F (10°C).

Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, with a chance of showers and thunderstorms. South winds near 10 mph. High 65°F (18°C). Low near 48°F (9°C). Sunday: Partly cloudy. High near 60°F (15°C). Low in the

Monday: Partly sunny. High near 60°F (15°C).



Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Friday, May 6, 2011

Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipita	ation Sy	Other Symbol		
			Snow	Rain	Fog	
High Pressure	Trough Warm Front	Showers	*	💠	Thunders	stor
Low Pressure		Light	*	•	O Haze	
e	AAAA Cold Front	Moderate	**	••	Compiled by M	IT
§ Hurricane	▲ _ Stationary Front	Heavy	.*.	•	Meteorology Sta	

Friday, May 6, 2011
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Data gathered in raid connects bin Laden to terror plot

By Mark Mazzetti and Scott Shane THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — After reviewing computer files and documents seized at the compound where Osama bin Laden was killed, U.S. intelligence analysts have concluded that the chief of al-Qaida played a direct role for years in plotting terror attacks from his hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, U.S. officials said

With bin Laden's whereabouts and activities a mystery in recent years, many intelligence analysts and terror experts had concluded that he had been relegated to an inspirational figure with little role in current and future al-Qaida operations.

A rushed examination of the trove of materials from the compound in Pakistan prompted Obama administration officials Thursday to issue a warning that al-Qaida last year had considered attacks on U.S. railroads.

The documents include a handwritten notebook from February 2010 that discusses tampering with tracks to derail a train on a bridge, possibly on Christmas, New Year's Day, the day of the State of the Union address, or the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, officials said. But they said there was no evidence of a specific plot. An Obama administration official said that documents about attacking railroads were among the first to be translated from Arabic and analyzed.

The materials, along with others reviewed in the intelligence cache, have given intelligence officials a much richer picture of the al-Qaida founder's leadership of the network as he tried to elude a global dragnet.

"He wasn't just a figurehead," said one U.S. official, speaking only on condition of anonymity, who had been briefed on the documents. "He continued to plot and plan, to come up with ideas about targets, and to communicate those ideas to other senior Qaida leaders."

The crash program across the intelligence community to translate and analyze the documents has as its top priority discovering any clues about terror attacks that might be in the works. Intelligence analysts also were scrubbing the files for any

information that might lead to identifying the location of al-Qaida's surviving leadership.

Since Sunday night, when President Barack Obama announced the killing of bin Laden in a daring raid, counterterrorism officials have been alert to the possibility of new attacks from al-Qaida to avenge its leader's death and prove its continuing relevance.

Department of Homeland Security officials have reviewed potential terrorist targets and deployed extra security at airports. And in response to the new evidence seized at the bin Laden compound, the Transportation Security Administration issued a bulletin to rail companies.

But officials emphasized that the information was both dated and vague.

"It looks very, very aspirational, and we have no evidence that it developed beyond the initial discussion," said Matt Chandler, a spokesman for Homeland Security. "We want to stress that this alleged al-Qaida plotting is based on initial reporting, which is often misleading or inaccurate and subject to change."

House Republicans are shelving bid to overhaul Medicare rules

By Carl Hulse and Jackie Calmes

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — House Republicans signaled Thursday that they were backing away from the centerpiece of their budget plan — a proposal to overhaul Medicare — in a decision that underscored both the difficulties and political perils of addressing the nation's long-term fiscal problems.

While top Republicans insisted that they remained committed to the Medicare initiative, which had become the target of intense attacks by Democrats and liberal groups in recent weeks, the lawmaker who would have to turn the proposal into legislation said he had no plans to do so any time soon.

The lawmaker, Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich., and chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, said that while he still supported the party's Medicare approach, opposition from Democrats made it pointless

to proceed

"I'm not interested in talking about whether the House is going to pass a bill that the Senate shows no interest in," Camp said in an appearance at the National Press Club. "I'm not interested in laying down more markers. I am interested in solutions."

Coupled with remarks by other House Republican leaders, his statement suggested that the party's Medicare proposal had been shelved, even though the party's lawmakers had taken a risky vote to pass the budget in the House just last month, and in the past two weeks had attempted to sell it to constituents in often-stormy town halls meetings.

Republicans suggested that they would continue to press to rein in the growing costs of Medicare, even if not through the current proposal, which would transform the program into one in which the federal government subsidized the purchase of private health insurance coverage by

Americans 65 and older.

Putting aside the proposal would remove one of the biggest points of contention between the parties as they address both the nation's longterm budget problems and the more immediate need for an agreement on raising the federal debt limit.

The development came as Vice President Joe Biden held a first negotiating session with members of both parties to try to find a deal that would allow Congress to raise the debt ceiling this year.

Republicans are demanding spending cuts and other measures to reduce the budget deficit as the price of support for raising the debt ceiling.

The Republican Medicare plan was never likely to be adopted as part of any deal on the debt limit. But the decision by Republicans to pull back the proposal was a tacit acknowledgment that the politics of entitlement reform remain so volatile that pressing ahead in the face of intense Democratic opposition could cost the party dearly at the polls.

US seeks to financially aid Libyans in rebel areas with seized assets

By Steven Lee Myers and Rachel Donadio

THE NEW YORK TIMES

ROME — The United States announced Thursday that it would try to release some of the more than \$30 billion in assets seized from Libya's leader, Moammar Gadhafi, as international officials said they would create a fund to give money directly to the Libyan rebels.

And for the first time, Qatar put the question of supplying arms to the rebels on the table, but no agreement was reached.

The developments came Thursday at a meeting in Rome that appeared to bolster the NATO-led military intervention. Hosted by Italy and Qatar, it brought together officials representing two dozen NATO nations, Arab countries, and international organizations.

The meeting was aimed at intensifying diplomatic and financial pressure on Gadhafi's government.

The military operation, which to critics seems stalled, has largely succeeded in its stated mission of stopping the advance of his forces but has not done enough to stop indiscriminate shelling in cities like Misrata and Zintan or force Gadhafi to step down.

"We shall not leave a divided and insecure Libya as a playground for Gadhafi's mercenaries," said Italy's foreign minister, Franco Frattini. "Our message must be that we shall keep up the pressure, using all legitimate means and with the aim also of convincing Gadhafi's entourage to join the many who have already defected."

Above all, the international officials said they would create a special fund of hundreds of millions of dollars to allow humanitarian and other financial assistance to flow into rebel-controlled parts of Libya despite United Nations sanctions that apply to Gadhafi's government.

Libya's opposition has asked for

billions of dollars' worth of help, including cash to pay salaries and provide services in the parts of the country under the control of the rebels, led by a group called the Transitional National Council. Frattini acknowledged that so far nations had provided only a fraction

But Thursday, Qatar's prime minister, Sheik Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani, said that Qatar would put \$400 million to \$500 million into the fund, and that Kuwait had put in \$180 million. "I don't think we have shortage of money, we had shortage of mechanism," Thani said. "Now, we agreed on the mechanism, that's what was important."

Frattini and Thani said the fund would be managed by a five-member steering board composed of three Libyans chosen by the Transitional National Council; a representative of Qatar; and a representative from either Italy or France on a sixmonth rotating basis.

Local Iraqi leaders blame branch of al-Qaida for yesterday's attack

 $\rm BAGHDAD-A$ suicide bomber attacked a police training center Thursday in the predominantly Shiite city of Hilla, south of Baghdad, killing 25 people and wounding at least 75 in the second major bombing in Iraq this week.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but officials blamed al-Qaida in Mesopotamia, a Sunni insurgent group that has conducted dozens of attacks in the city in recent years, including several in which the police and security officials were targets.

The attack was the deadliest in Iraq since insurgents promised to increase violence in response to the killing of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan on Monday.

Coming after a bombing attack killed 10 people in a Shiite neighborhood of Baghdad on Tuesday, the violence underscored the continuing challenges for Iraqi security forces to secure the country as U.S. forces withdraw by the end of the year.

Although there are far fewer attacks than at the height of the sectarian war in 2007, there are still bombings and assassinations virtually every day.

-Michael S. Schmidt, The New York Times

A year after devastating damage, gratitude in a tornado-torn town

YAZOO CITY, Miss. — Just more than a year ago, when the 170-mph winds of a deadly tornado ripped the eastern stretch of this town to shreds, Noreene Girard could do nothing but cry.

"The trauma of it was unbearable," she said, recalling the devastation that struck this struggling part of the Delta region.

The tornado damaged 300 homes, killed 10 people and caused \$50 million in damage, earning its place as the worst natural disaster in Mississippi since Hurricane Katrina.

But this week, Girard was shedding tears of a different sort, as members of Hillcrest Baptist Church hoisted a fresh white steeple above the timber frame that is to be their new sanctuary. It was a moment that, to Girard and others, felt like a crowning achievement against the storm.

"To be down for so long and finally feel that you are coming back up?" she said. "I just started to cry."

The healing that has taken place here is only just beginning in the rest of the region, as cities and towns continue to search for the missing and assess the destruction spawned last week by a barrage of tornadoes from Texas to Virginia.

—Susan Saulny, The New York Times

House passes bill to reinstate auctions for offshore drilling

WASHINGTON — With rising gasoline prices and skyrocketing oil company profits as a backdrop, the House approved a bill Thursday to force the Obama administration to accelerate oil lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico and off the Virginia coast.

The 266-149 vote, largely along party lines, was a skirmish in the larger battle between Republicans and Democrats to capitalize on consumer anger over the price of gasoline, which has now passed \$4 a gallon in most parts of the country.

The bill would reinstate auctions for the right to drill offshore, which have been pushed back by the administration to allow more time for environmental and safety reviews.

Opponents of the measure said the Republican-sponsored bill, titled the Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act, reflected "amnesia" about the dangers of offshore drilling barely a year after the Deepwater Horizon blowout killed 11 people and spewed about 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi, the House Democratic leader, said Republicans were pushing an energy agenda that benefited multinational oil companies without providing relief for U.S. motorists.

"Republicans have brought to the floor another 'drill only' bill that would not bring down prices at the pump," Pelosi said. "It's a boon to Big Oil that would make another catastrophic oil spill more likely."

—John M. Broder, The New York Times

Climate changes hinder crop yields in some areas, study finds

Global warming is already cutting substantially into potential crop yields in some countries — to such an extent that it may be a factor in the food price increases that have caused worldwide stress in recent years, researchers suggest in a new study.

Yields were down by more than 10 percent in Russia and by a few percentage points each in India, France, and China compared with what they probably would have been without rising temperatures, according to the study, which focused on the years 1980 to 2008

Corn yields were off a few percentage points in China, Brazil, and France from what would have been expected, said the researchers, whose findings were published in Friday's issue of the journal Science

Some countries saw small gains from the temperature increases, however. And in all agricultural countries, the extra carbon dioxide that humans are pumping into the air acted as a fertilizer that helped to encourage plant growth, offsetting some of the losses from rising temperatures caused by that same greenhouse gas.

The study's authors found that when the gains in some countries were weighed against the losses in others the overall global effect of climate change on crop yields has been small so far: losses of a few percentage points for wheat and corn from what they would have been without climate change. The overall impact on production of rice and soybeans was negligible.

But the authors of the study — David Lobell and Justin Costa-Roberts of Stanford University and Wolfram Schlenker of Columbia University — pointed out that temperature increases were expected to accelerate in coming decades, making it likely that that the impact on food production will worsen at a time when demand is expected to rise sharply.

—Justin Gillis, The New York Times



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Rights, not bureaucracy, are imperative

The UN should denounce violence against civilians in Syria

By Rachel Bandler
STAFF COLUMNIST

This Friday marks the sixth week of widespread political protests across Syria, where hundreds have been killed on the streets and thousands more are still missing. Shockingly, however, the United Nations Security Council was not able to release even a press statement criticizing the violence in Syria. This stands in stark contrast to the firm international stance taken against Libya, and clearly demonstrates the corruption and inefficiency of the United Nations. Nothing but hypocrisy can explain the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Libya for humanitarian purposes, and yet not demand a mere utterance against the ongoing slaughter in Syria.

The current president of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, is determined to remain in power despite the raging protests within his borders calling for his removal. The unrest, which has only grown in recent weeks, has been met with brutal violence in a desperate attempt to quash dissent. In recent days the epicenter of killing has shifted to the southern town of Dara'a, which has subsequently been besieged, infiltrated with snipers, and disconnected from electricity and water. The situation in Dara'a has deteriorated to the point where civilians cannot leave their homes without fear of coming under gunfire, and rampant supply shortages leave the vast majority in want.

Repressive government rule, though not to the current extremes, is not new in Syria. The last Syrian president, Hafez alAssad, remained in power for nearly three decades and was responsible for the Hama massacre of 1982, in which he ordered the murder of 10,000 Syrian citizens to quell a Sunni revolt. Now his son is the current president and is only continuing to rule by his father's authoritarian methodology. For instance, in a 1996 Freedom House report evaluating democratic freedoms, Syria received a seven, the lowest possible mark. The trend of subjugation continues to this day, and in Syria no laws discourage honor killings, fair elections are non-existent, and homosexuality is punishable with three years imprisonment. Freedom of ideas is minimal, and prohibitions against free media, artistic expression, and foreign press

The killing of civilians and repression of democracy in Syria deserves harsh rebuke.

Nonetheless, the United Nations Security Council was unable to get the unanimous vote it needed from its members to issue a simple criticism of the Syrian government. This is remarkable, considering the level of violence being used against protesters in Syria and in light of the swift action taken against Libya for seemingly the same injustices. When NATO was debating whether or not to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya, one of the primary horrors brought as justification for intervention was the use of snipers

against civilians. In Syria, the same reports are being circulated, yet the same outcry has not been heard.

In truth, there is no major humanitarian justification that would warrant intervention in Libya but not in Syria. The reason for the discrepancy is because the U.N. Security Council is an ineffective and corrupt body that presents itself merely as a forum for political factions to align, and to prevent meaningful progress from actually occurring. For one, Lebanon - one of the Council's current non-permanent mem- led the way in blocking a resolution on Syria. Lebanon, which has strong ties to Syria, refused to openly admonish Syria and managed to prevent any resolution from passing. Such a stalemate seems overly bureaucratic and self-defeating for a council given the grave responsibility of maintaining international peace and

The U.N. Security Council's failure is only one of its many recent shortcomings, like last month's Goldstone Report retraction. Hopefully, the United States and other major international players will decide that real reform is needed in the United Nations so that it can serve its purpose: to protect and ensure world security, prosperity, and human rights. Perhaps recent documentaries exposing the corruption of the U.N., such as Ami Horowitz's film U.N. Me, can promote real reform. Regardless, the killing of civilians and repression of democracy in Syria deserves harsh criticism, and it is unjust for selfish state diplomacy to block disparagement of brutality.

Mission Accomplished

With bin Laden's death, a clear path to Afghanistan withdrawal

By Keith Yost STAFF COLUMNIST

In the aftermath of the U.S's successful strike in Abbottabad, much attention has been given to what Osama bin Laden's death means for the war on terror. Was bin Laden still an operational leader within al-Qaida, and if so, how much does his death hamper the group's ability to conduct terrorism? Will jihadists still be able to recruit, fundraise, and coalesce under a single banner without their premier standard-bearer? How much safer is the United States with the world's number one mass-killer moldering at the bottom of the ocean?

These are important questions, and the debate over how significant a blow al-Qaida has been dealt (my own answer is "serious, if not fatal") deserves to continue. But the circumstances surrounding bin Laden's death raise some tough questions of their own, the foremost of which is this: how is it that bin Laden, the most-wanted man in the world, the man the United States has been paying Pakistan over a billion dollars a year to help catch, managed to stay hidden right smack in the middle of Pakistan's political and military elite?



This was no remote cave in a lawless region — bin Laden's compound was a short jog from the Pakistan Military Academy, a military school equivalent to our own West Point — and a short drive from the capital of the country itself, Islamabad. Were Paki-

stan not so incompetent a state, we could be sure that they knew where bin Laden was from the start — at a minimum, bin Laden's location must have been known

Osama, Page 5

CORRECTIONS

A sports article published last Tuesday incorrectly stated that the MIT baseball team would be playing in the NEWMAC conference tournament this weekend. MIT competed in the tournament last weekend, on April 30.

OPINION POLICY

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Obama should use bin Laden victory strategically

Osama, from Page 4

to Pakistan's notoriously perfidious Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate.

Ultimately, it does not matter whether Pakistan is a faithless ally or merely an inept one — it has proven itself unreliable and incapable of aiding U.S. interests. Our commander-in-chief may have limited ability to influence the success of missions like Abbottabad, but he does get to set the broad strokes of foreign policy. Regardless of how much credit Obama receives for bin Laden's death, the discovery of the al-Qaida leader so embarrassingly close to Islamabad vindicates the president's recent efforts to realign the United States away from Pakistan and toward India.

Strategic realignment in southwest Asia will not be without its costs. Although much has been done in the past few months to reorganize NATO's logistics and run more of our supplies through Russia, it is hard to imagine success in defeating the Taliban without proactive support from Pakistan. In addition, our partner in Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, has shown himself to be an even greater scoundrel than his 2009 vote-rigging suggested. The problem is not just that he is corrupt — he consistently over-estimates his negotiating power and tries to extort more from the U.S. than his position warrants. As a means of cajoling the United States, he has suggested all manner of geopolitical alli-



ances with which to replace us. China, Pakistan, and even the Taliban, Karzai imagines, could act as guarantors of his security. None of these partnerships are likely to materialize if the U.S. departs, yet it seems the only way to convince Mr. Karzai of that is to leave him alone for a few years and let him have a go at his fantasies.

Obama would do well, therefore, to make the best lemonade he can out of his lemons. The death of bin Laden gives the president the capital to dictate AfPak policy; he should use it to stick to his 2014 deadline for withdrawal from Afghanistan and accelerate our growing partnership with India.

The downside risk of leaving Pakistan and Afghanistan to the bed they have made is that some rival state — or a resurgent al-Qaida — will fill the void. The odds, however, are unlikely; China, the odds-on favorite for AfPak void filling, already has its hands full with one basket-case nuclear ally — they

would do better to compete with the U.S. for India's affections than adopt another North Korea to its west. Russia, given its Chechnya problem, is unlikely to forge any partnership that would be disturbing to America. Virtually all the Muslim countries worth mentioning are too pre-occupied with Middle East turmoil to begin an adventure elsewhere. And as for the prospect of al-Qaida filling the void, the 2014 departure date leaves NATO plenty of time to ensure that outcome remains a hypothetical.

If the geopolitical case for leaving Afghanistan were not strong enough, there are domestic reasons as well. Exploding entitlement programs and runaway spending have left Washington in a fiscal crunch. Operations in Afghanistan have cost the U.S. roughly \$40 billion per year since their inception. While this figure may be a paltry sum in a world of multi-trillion dollar budgets, every little saving means more foregone taxes and more preserved services for American citizens.

There were plenty of turns that the Afghanistan war could have taken that would have led us to a better point than where we are today. Nonetheless, we stand at as opportune a moment as we are likely to see. There is uncertainty whenever any alteration is made to the status quo, but this uncertainty cannot be allowed to paralyze our decision-making. The time has come to leave Afghanistan.

Do you blog?

The Tech is starting a blog this semester.

If you care about politics, international relations, or campus events, but don't have the time to write long-form opinion columns, this is your chance.

We want bloggers to write short entries for two Opinion features:



2012 Presidential Elections

Things that happen in the U.S. political world. 2011 is shaping up to be an exciting year!



Things that happen here at MIT (dining, student government, dorms, orientation...take your pick!)

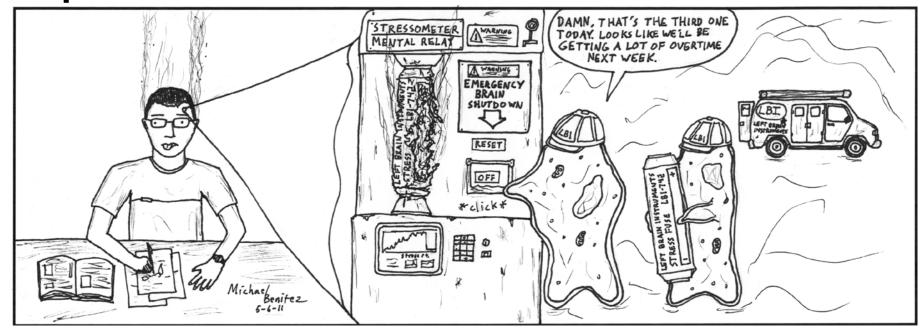
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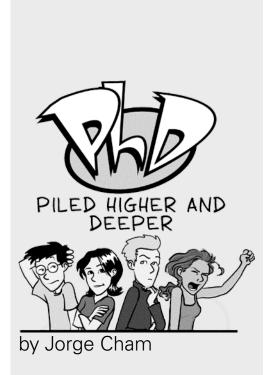
email us at:

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FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011 **6** The Tech

Help Desk by Michael Benitez





















WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

Crossword Puzzle

Solution, page 13

ACROSS

NFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN FUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN

- 1 Speaker booster
- 7 Overcharged illegally
- 13 Western evergreen named for its eventual bark color
- 14 Theoretical, as profits
- 16 Unending, in poetry
- 17 Based on medical observation instead of theory
- 19 White sale items
- 20 Like expensive fight seats
- 21 Bearded blossom
- 22 Enthusiasm
- 24 Chief Valhalla god
- 25 Makes automatic
- 28 God, in Guadalajara
- 29 "Don't move, Fido"
- 30 Adjective for a yellow bikini, in a 1960 #1 hit
- 32 More shadowy, as evening 36 Slanders
- 37 Punctual
- 38 Carry

FUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN

- 39 Eddie __, New York cop involved in the actual "French Connection"
- 40 Winter Olympics
- contestants 46 OR activity
- 47 It might save your skin
- 48 Mariner's heading
- 49 Shoves off
- 52 Again and again? 54 Small and unimportant, as a Western town

- __ powder
- 56 Garden tool
- 57 Plaza Hotel sprite
- 58 Divers' fishing implements
- 59 Classified

DOWN

- 1 It's before the main event, briefly
- 2 Hang it up, so to speak
- 3 Blissful
- 4 Anew
- 5 State where the Mississippi R. originates
- 6 Oscar winners, e.g.
- 7 Have a wild time
- 8 Modern way to shop
- 9 __ arms
- 10 Turf controller
- 11 TV series opener 12 Tough job for a beauty
- contestant judge 15 Contact the harbor master
- from one's ship 18 Camera parts
- 23 Inventive sort?
- 26 "Sure __ standing ..."
- 27 Oscar winners' winnings
- 31 Na or Cl, e.g.
- 32 Playground retort
- 33 Salve
- 34 Appetizers
- 35 Royal office
- 36 Magic charm
- 38 Tractor attachments 41 Wilhelm's title in WWI
- 10 11 12 13 14 15 17 16 18 20 19 21 24 23 25 26 28 27 31 36 33 34 35 32 37 38 39 40 42 43 44 41 45 46 47 48 49 52 50 53 51 54 55 57 56 58 59
 - Germany 42 Sitting room 43 Draw out
- 44 Disqualify (oneself), as a

45 Appeared to be

- 50 A few
- 51 Weapons, in Latin 53 Head light?

Friday, May 6, 2011
The Tech 7

by Jerry Holkins

and Mike Krahulik

Part The Rusted Chains



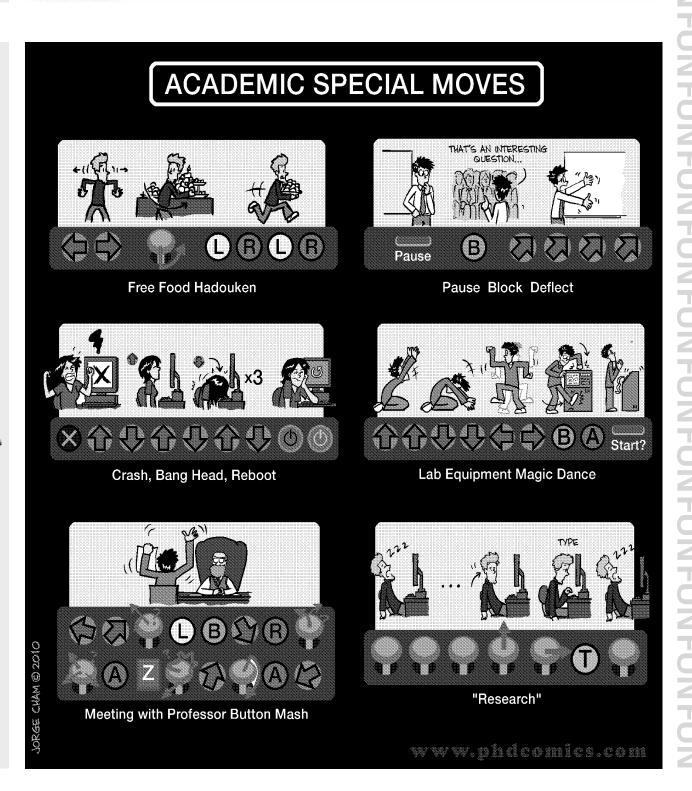
The Value Proposition





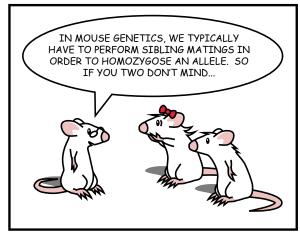


PILED HIGHER AND DEEPER by Jorge Cham

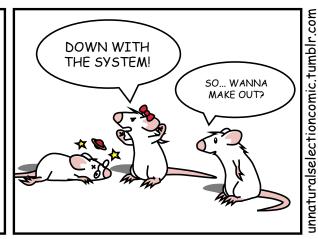


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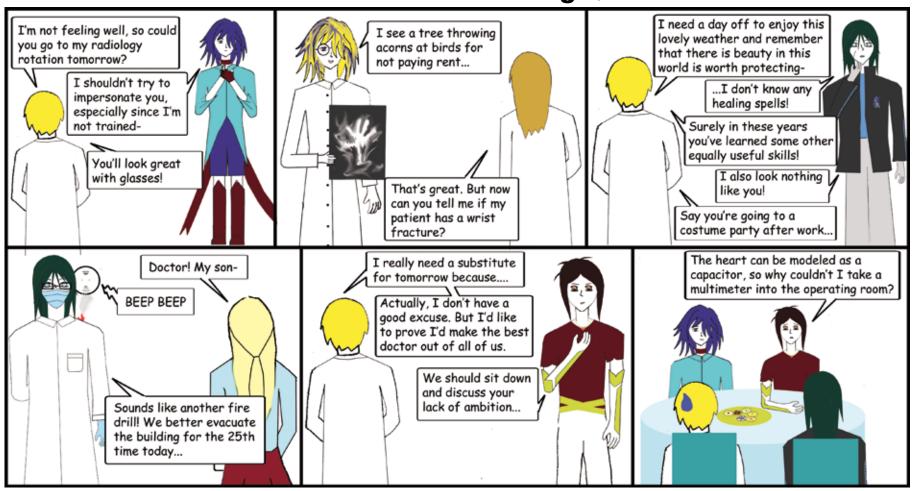
Unnatural Selection by Meisel/Tonn/Wang







Somewhere on the Search for Meaning by Letitia Li



Dilbert by Scott Adams





Sudoku

Solution, page 13

	9		3	4	1			
						7		
5			7		8		4	9
	5		2				7	4
	3						8	
9	7				6		5	
9	4		1		7			2
		1						
			6	3	4		1	

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

Techdoku

Solution, page 13

2-		24×		10×	
5×	5	-		9+	
	216×		5-		4
6×	┨		300×		2÷
		5÷	<u> </u>	24×	
2-		-			3

INTERVIEW

Storyteller of the ordinary and the fantastical

Miranda July explains the workings behind independent film, art ... anything

By Philipp M. Diesinger and Natthida Wiwatwicha

STAFF WRITERS

At age 37, independent film director, actress, artist, writer, and musician Miranda July already has various forms of creative work under her belt, ranging from webbased experimental projects to novels and multimedia performance. July's stories, inspired by magical realism and the avantgarde, often involves ordinary settings and situations examined in great depths. Her most eminent work, Me and You and Everyone We Know (2005), won several awards, including Caméra d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival and Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival. July visited Boston last week to present her latest movie, The Future, at The Independent Film Festival Boston (IFFBoston), which took place from April 27 to May 4 and had more than 100 film screenings in theaters across Cambridge and Boston. At a roundtable, The Tech had the opportunity to speak with July about independent films, the artistic process, and, yes, school.

In your work you seem to focus on the little things in life — which are highly realistic — but at the same time there is a lot of surrealism, and your way of telling stories seems highly imaginary. How do you balance those

Miranda July: Those two realms are most interesting to me. In my life I focus almost too much on the littlest thing. I'm just kind of floored by the person next to me on the plane: Everything about them seems so interesting, and that really easily turns into a story in my head. At the same time I'm trying to get at things that are really hard to articulate or explain and aren't details, aren't based in the tangible reality — I'm trying to find symbols or metaphors or place holders so I can to bring them into the world, There's a scene [in *The Future*] where I'm in a shirt. I wanted to show — and I have had that feeling — of betraying myself so much that I felt like I was haunting myself. To have a security blanket T-shirt crawling after her felt like a more ac-

curate way of showing that feeling than just being despondent.

When you first get an idea for a story or get an image such as a shirt crawling on the floor, how do you know personally what will be right for which medium?

MJ: Usually I just know because I'm trying to come up with ideas for a particular work; everything I'm thinking of is in that category. But this movie began as a short story, and a lot of the ideas, including the shirt, came about in the performance part of it. Weirder ideas are not that weird in a performance context where anything goes. It was an interesting challenge to make [a shirt] a character.

How do you view the connection between performance and writing process? Do you think actively about what kind of people will be performing?

MJ: I don't. I act out the whole thing as I'm going, which is fine for my roles, but it means that I have a very specific idea how exactly I want it said by the time I get to the casting process, which makes it hard — I get very narrow and specific, and so many great actors are brought to me. It's also quite visual. so I feel, why not be dumb about it and say, "Well, these two people look like they go together," and be almost comic book-like about

Your characters seem to be speaking a private language. Do you have that goal in your films to connect the viewers — that even though things are happening in a very bizarre or particular way, they actually have some kind of universality?

MJ: When I feel like it's good, working, I don't worry about weirdness. I think even when people logically are a little unsure, on some other level they'll be nodding. This is my job, is to go out on a limb while simultaneously being familiar and inviting. That's the line to walk.

Independent movies have become more and more successful during the past years. Could you give us your perspective on the development of that community, and could you imagine working for one of the big Hollywood film studios even though that would mean ac-



Miranda July wrote, directed, and starred in independent film *The Future*.

cepting constraints?

MJ: Well, certainly. If anyone wants to give me a lot of money to do my script, I would love that. It's not by choice. If you're not going to cast stars and if you do something that looks as risky as this does on the paper, it kind of ends up being this budget. I don't know. Have things really gotten better for independent movies? The last few years were definitely not a great time for anyone to get financing for their movies. When I was struggling to get money for this movie and I felt like it wasn't that hard for my first movie, people would say, "You'd never be able to make that first movie now." That was kind of the end of an era as far as companies thinking that this could be the next big thing. But at the same time, there is a lot more, much smallerbudget movies - ones that are a couple hundred thousands of dollars. And some of them break out. So in that sense there are just a lot more movies. Period.

When you decided to drop out of college, what was going on in your mind? Was it spontaneous? What was the motivation?

MJ: I was already doing fanzines and per-

The Future

Directed by Miranda July Starring Miranda July, Hamish Linklater, and David Warshofsky

formances, and I took those things so seriously. In fact, I was insulted by the fact that as long as I did them in school they would be thought of as student productions. That just seemed so belittling to me. The impetus was I started dating someone in Portland and there was a moment — like when you quit a job. You just suddenly realize, "Oh. I could just leave." It was part of becoming an adult. Some people become an adult through college, but for me, it took leaving it to really realize that I have that autonomy. I still love that feeling. How do you do that now? I don't

The Future will open in Boston on July 29,

BALLET REVIEW

Pure movement, pure beauty

Bella Figura's inventive choreography taps into the core of ballet

By Linh Vuong

Tearing myself away from campus during the MIT 150 open house to watch Bella Figura was a difficult feat. But as I watched the ballet, I knew it was a worthy sacrifice. I glued my eyes to the stage, completely blown away by the beauty of movement and the emotions that the dancers imparted to the audience.

As the curtain rose up, a white stage with a card saying "THE" on the floor in front and several stools at the back were revealed. Two white screens harred the exits at the two sides of the stage, meaning that the dancers would never leave the stage during the performance. They would give their absolute best, and indeed, the second detail was electrifying. Apart from the unconventional choice of (think techno), the choreography was equally refreshing. The ballet featured explosive jumps, kicks, shakes, and snaps as well as playful and seducing hip-swinging and body waves. One of my favorite parts was when nearly all the dancers lay scattered on the floor and were brought back to life by the two female dancers left standing. These "reawakenings" involved a short routine between revived and reviver, harmonious and alive. And the performances of the male dancers were stunning, especially that of John Lam, whose movements seemed to obliterate the limits of the human body and elevate its beauty to a new level. His solo was sensational; I have never seen a body stretched out tautly in a leap so beautiful. This segment ended on an enigmatic note: as the music turned suspenseful and the lights dimmed. Lorna Feijóo appeared in a white dress and performed an extremely dramatic routine with headbanging, jerky, and ferocious movements. The ability to let her ballerina body loosen to carry such wild movements while remaining in a state of absolute control and awareness the mark of a mature and flourishing dancer.

The second segment, choreographed by Helen Pickett, was undoubtedly my favorite. Pickett, inspired by "love, vulnerability and passion," seemed to breathe into the choreography of the ballet a touch of femininity and tenderness that can reach the audience in a way that I never thought possible. Part I, "Layli o Majnun," was based on a poignant tale about two young Persians who fell madly in love with each other but were prevented from getting married. Majnun (John Lam) hence descended into Madness (Sabi Varga) and died in the wilderness, heartbroken and eternally separated from his lover, Layli (Misa Kuranaga). The ballet started with Lam and Kuranaga performing a succession of moves, and then the stage darkened as if swallowing up the couple into an abyss of despair and misery. The chemistry of the two dancers as their bodies intertwined thoroughly expressed the feelings of yearning and desire, while lifts and slow mid-air splits conveyed the agony experienced by the two lovers.

Part II, "Tsukiyo," originated from a Japanese fairy tale ("The Woodcutter's Daughter") about a woodcutter who discovers a fairy in the stem of a bamboo tree. He and his wife raise her as their daughter, and she turns into a magnificent lady. The ballet describes the moment when the fairy turns 18 and has to return to the moon, parting with mortal romance. Kathleen Breen Combes transformed into an ethereal beauty so fragile, so delicate and perfect. Lorin Mathis, her partner in this pas de deux, danced with her ever so gently, expressed in every touch, every lift. At a few points during this piece, I felt as if Combes would fade away into nothingness, but Mathis' tender, yearning touch managed to pull her back to our world. Tears ran down my cheek as I was mesmerized by the purity of love that transcends time and space. The poignant orchestral music by Arvo Pärt was the perfect complement for this piece.

Perhaps I invested so much emotion into "Tsukiyo" that I couldn't really comprehend "Tabula Rasa." The choreography was powerful, but a stage flooded with flashing blue lights and energetic music seemed like an anomaly when presented after the first two mini-pieces.

Bella Figura Boston Ballet Company April 30, 2011

Revealed at the end of the production,

Boston Opera House

Bella Figura by Jirí Kylián was what everyone had been waiting for. And it was worth the wait: for the opening, Rie Ichikawa, held above the ground by someone behind the curtain, looked as if she was struggling to break free from a black hole. Varga danced with contorted movements at the other side of the stage, as if he were restrained as well. Manipulation of stage curtains played

a huge role in Bella Figura. The curtains moved in all directions to create different windows and focuses on stage. Once, the curtain closed completely, leaving on stage three dancers - topless and wearing only red puffy bottoms — who then danced an impeccably synchronized and sensual routine. There had been a buzz before the premiere about the partial nudity, but I think it was sheer brilliance. At many points during the ballet, I couldn't recognize the genders of the dancers, which lead me to understand Kylián's wisdom: the dance boiled down to pure beauty of movements of muscle and joints, and nothing more.

The highlight of the production features two female dancers dancing while kneeling at center stage, focusing their movements only on their upper bodies. They were phenomenal; the arm and torso movements on top of the lower body covered in red garments created an illusion of human beings' rebirth, coming into existence out of fire.

The production came to an end, but it left us — the audience — hungry for more. Thank you, William Forsythe, Helen Pickett, and Jirí Kylián for your hauntingly beautiful creations. The ballets reached the deepest place in my heart and hopefully others' as well.



Altan Dugaraa, Sarah Wroth, and Yury Yanowsky perform in Boston Ballet's Bella

Figura.

BOOK REVIEW

Giving back the funk?

Tony Rauch's short stories are a worthy solution to that pre-finals slump

By Kathryn Dere

ARTS EDITOR

Perhaps I can explain the draw of Tony Rauch's new book, eyeballs growing all over me ... again, rather quickly through one analogy: The Mysteries of Harris Burdick (1984, Chris Van Allsburg). Harris Burdick was a collection of illustrations by Van Allsburg, each accompanied by a title and a single line of text. The goal, according to elementary school teachers, was to make children think creatively and come up with stories incorporating the text and the picture. "Mr. Linden's Library," a picture of a sleeping girl and vines sprouting from the binding of an open book in front of her, sparked a sea of creative juices from excited fifth graders; eyeballs does the same thing for the more mature reader.

Rauch's eyeballs, the perfect solution to that artistic funk that visits us more often than we would like, is almost as if Tim Burton had injected some of his slightly darker ideas into van Allsburg's illustrations. But while Burton's The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories (1997) was often downright disturbing, eyeballs growing all over me ... again carries a stream of strangely cheerful acceptances of the extraordinary goings-on throughout most of these tall tales.

On the surface, the stories - sometimes a few pages long and other times only a few paragraphs long — all seem incredibly far-fetched and ridiculous. But for as many times as Rauch reaches out and explores the exciting other worlds,

For as many times as Rauch reaches out and explores the exciting other worlds, he clings onto stark reality.

he clings onto stark reality. "Send krupac through the portal" tells the tale of a young man who decides to journey through parallel universes. His motives, however, are less lofty: The young man's state of mind is not unlike post-Summer Tom in (500) Days of Summer, and he sojourns in the hopes that somewhere out there, his love interest will reciprocate his feelings. A fleeting sense of foreboding comes from Hinrich, a man who had tried unsuccessfully to gain

the affections of his love in life after life: "He has a sad look about him — far-away eyes, furrowed brow, sunken cheeks, as if he has been living with the same uncertain burden hanging over his head for years and years."

Such lucidity also comes in the form of

unlikely characters and situations. There's the paperboy-spy, a minor with that kind of wisdom and understanding that only children have, who encounters a scientist growing identical humanoids in fish tanks in his basements. (Incidentally, he also makes me want to belt out "Little People" from Les Misérables.) The poor protagonist in "giant chicken menacing from above" brings together comedy and tragic social commentary, bemoaning, "I try everything — poking fun at the inner existentialism of the lonely starkness of the modern design magazines, inciting brawls and rural pancake houses, faking flamboyant panic attacks at solemn basilicas ... - hoping to find the secret of life hidden amongst its many layers of meaning." In "people have been drifting away lately," Rauch describes a world where "you'll see someone scattering down the street, flat as can be, caught

in the wind like an old newspaper." Most unnerving is the nonchalance with eyeballs growing all over me ... again by Tony Rauch

Eraserhead Press October 2010 \$10.95

which all the characters face the weirdness that they encounter. In "the eyes," a boy reveals a metallic skeletal structure underneath the skin of his arm, and none of his friends are particularly shocked: "Randy, are you a robot?' Dolly wondered politely, as if concerned."

The ending to each of these tales is often anti-climactic, and often humorous. Are we ever meant to really know what is going on? Probably not. But in the bizarre situations that Rauch crafts, we often see reality: Somehow those subtle layers of completely implausible situations reopen that door outside the box. It's an escape from the MIT grindstone — and a way out of the dreaded artistic funk.

B

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FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011
THE TECH 11

Mood Meters aggregate, report student smile data

To address privacy concerns, developers say Mood Meters only collect smile metrics

Mood Meters, from Page 1

all the data they collect during the project visible — in real time — on their website, http://moodmeter.media.mit.edu.

The success of the Mood Meter is apparent from the crowds of visitors seen collecting around the screens and students stopping in the hall to smile and observe how the Meter fluctuates

People were not always so enthused about the project, especially due to privacy concerns. Prior to the deployment of the project, Hoque and Hernandez met with Information Services and Technology (IS&T), the Security and Emergency Management Office (SEMO), and Audio Visual Services to explain that the Meter does not record images or any personal information of those passing by. Instead, they said, the installation collects data from a live feed of, according to Hernandez, "just the number of smiles" and "just the number of people."

Hernandez and Hoque were open about the objective of the project from the beginning and maintained that there never was going to be any image recording. Because of this, they said they were able to win over the concerned parties and obtain the permission needed to install the Mood Meters. Hoque said that with "transparency from the very beginning, people can be very supportive and understanding."

Although Hernandez and Hoque have received countless suggestions on what they could do next with their Mood Meter, such as one Twitter user's suggestion to "install this meter immediately in the U.S. Senate," neither have any future plans for the Mood Meter at the moment; instead, they both said they would prefer to focus on research. Nevertheless, they hope that by engaging the community and addressing the

Both developers agreed that they wanted to 'cheer up the mood of MIT,' Hernandez said.

issue of privacy, they have served as a voice for this type of technology, paving the way for future applications.

The idea of assessing emotions with the use of technology is not necessarily new. For example, the Dutch Applications Company has created an application for iPhone and Android called Happy Map that questions users in Belgium about their mood and then generates a map of the mood levels across the country. However, such data can be unreliable due to user's subjectivities. Technology employed in the Mood Meter instead aims to provide a more accurate and objective method of assessing moods and emotions.



JESSICA L. WASS-THE TECH

"Mood Meters," a FAST Art Festival installation, have taken up residence in the Infinite Corridor, the Stata Center, the Media Lab, and the first floor of the Student Center.

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MIT Entrepreneurship

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def learnMarketableJobSkills():
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return linux, OSX, javascript, applescript, perl, python, PHP

if self.interest == True: print "E-mail join@tech.mit.edu"

---:---F1 joinTechno.py

(Python)--L1--Top-

12 THE TECH FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011

GSC pleased with engagement on Walker space Feasibility of repurposing still under review; planning ahead for student group relocation

Walker, from Page 1

tration has been granted one.

"I would like to complement Professor Schmidt on the excellent job he's done improving student engagement," former GSC President and student member of the assessment team Ulric J. Ferner said. "It's not easy to collectively survey student opinion like this. I'm amazed at the amount of work that's been done, the progress that's been made, and the transparency of the whole process." Current GSC President Alex Evans, who was part of the original GSC task force before the assessment team was formed, agreed with this sentiment.

The GSC, in conjunction with the Black Students' Union, has been hosting group meetings to gather input from the Walker groups. This also

ensures that there is a standardized method for accurately gauging and representing student opinion.

"I don't plan on changing anything with how the process is going," Evans said. "We just want to do the best we can to get the info out there."

The feasibility of the repurposing project is still under review. The assessment team is also reviewing scenarios for the student groups should the project go forward, looking primarily at temporary co-location of groups in Walker as well as dual use of what would become MTA spaces. However, a decision is still a long way from being made.

"There are substantial technical issues that we are still in the midst of reviewing," UA student representative William F. Steadman '11 said, "There are a lot of foreseen and unforeseen circumstances that we need to take into account, including potential structural changes to the building." Like GSC officials, Steadman was also pleased with the administration's engagement process.

The team hopes to deliver the final report to the decision-making administrators by the end of May or early June, but no hard deadline has been set.

The Walker Memorial Assessment Team can be reached at walker-input@mit.edu.



PHOTOILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA LIU; PHOTOS BY MELISSA RENÉE SCHUMACHER—TECH FILE PHOTO Several of Walker Memorial's student groups, pictured in this December 2010 file photo. The Walker Memorial Assessment Team is evaluating the feasibility of using Walker as a space for Music and Theater Arts, which could mean students groups will need to find new homes.

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FALL 2011 - LECTURE: MW EVE (5:30-8 PM) (32-144)

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011 **THE TECH 13**

Students, faculty spearhead restoration

23 years of dirt and deterioration fixed by Kendall Band Society

Pythagoras, from Page 1

tracks. "That was from around one in the morning to about four in the morning. ... That's the only time we can go down there," said Shaymus W. Hudson '12, who joined the project last spring after receiving an email from Tarkanian. "It was a lot of fun though."

In January of this year, the group set a goal of completing the restoration of Pythagoras by the open house on April 30. According to Tarkanian, they worked an average of six to eight hours per week during most of the term, except during spring break, when they worked all day. The team, however, was restricted to working on the platform handles outside rush hours, while reconstruction of Pythagoras was limited to the overnight hours.

The group was also stymied by the fact that they did not know which parts were broken before taking the sculpture apart. "We just evaluated as we went," Tar-

'I thought that students here would probably be very interested in getting involved.

Clarise E. Snyder MUSIC AND THEATER ARTS

Students involved with the restoration effort also took the op-

portunity to clean the bells, which had accumulated years of dirt and grime. "We built a lathe so that we could take scour pads and make it all shiny. After the first one was done, it was so pristine. It was pretty amazing," Hudson said. "After we finished putting everything up,

'It was pretty great seeing all that work finished and seeing the whole entire product in operation.

I remember one of us went up to it and rotated it and started playing with it. You could see all the bells moving again; it was pretty great seeing all that work finished and seeing the whole entire product in operation, and it looks really, really nice."

The group is planning to restore the remaining two T-stop sculptures, Galileo and Kepler, sometime this summer, although no concrete timeline has been set. Tarkanian predicted their restoration would not take as long as that of *Pythagoras*. The group also has plans to create CAD drawings so future restorations have somewhere to begin. "We're kind of maintaining the sculpture longterm, so now that there's an official MIT student group involved, hopefully it will be taken care of well into the future," Tarkanian



Pythagoras, the musical art installed in the Kendall T station, was recently restored by MIT's Kendall Band Preservation Society. The soci-

ety plans to repair smaller Kendall installations this summer.



Paul Matisse, the artist behind the Pythagoras musical sculpture in the Kendall T station, attends the Kendall Band re-installation ceremony on April 30. In 2010, the MIT Kendall Band Preservation Society embarked on a 13-month restoration project to repair the hanging set of hammers and chimes.



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1	5	4	2	3	6
5	3	2	6	1	4
3	1	6	4	5	2
2	6	5	3	4	1
4	2	1	5	6	3

Solution to Sudoku

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Solution to Crossword

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Friday, May 6, 2011
The Tech 15

Fervor roils markets as IPO backlog builds

By Evelyn M. Rusli
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Companies are lining up to go public. Market conditions are favorable. Investor appetite is strong.

But not all the stocks are sure

Following a string of healthy debuts, the pipeline for initial public offerings is bursting. In all, 168 companies are waiting to go public in the United States — the largest backlog since 2000, according to Renaissance Capital, an IPO advisory firm. The group, which includes Dunkin' Brands, LinkedIn, and Toys R Us, is aiming to raise some \$38 billion.

The situation is similar overseas. Glencore, the world's largest commodities trader, is set to go public with a dual listing in Hong Kong and London. The offering, at roughly \$10 billion, is on track to be the largest IPO this year.

"The IPO market is a cycle, it's bought on hope, held in greed and sold in fear — we're in the first stage," said John E. Fitzgibbon Jr., founder of the research firm IPO Scoop.

The pickup in public offerings is natural, given the strength of the broader equity markets. After suffering a setback during the European debt crisis, the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index is up 28 percent since August. It tracks the improvement in the deal-making environment, with mergers and acquisitions at their highest volume since before the financial crisis.

"There is a connection between the M&A market and going public," said David J. Goldschmidt, a lawyer at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom who specializes in capital markets transactions. "Today we have a stronger M&A market and stronger stock market, which gives private companies the option to take a company public or to sell it."

Investor interest is high, too. In one sign, traffic to Renaissance Capital's website rose 40 percent in April to 400,000 unique visitors and is on track to reach a record in May. Fitzgibbon of IPO Scoop says the number of subscribers to his site has

doubled from last year.

With investors clamoring, corporate issuers are increasingly gaining the upper hand in pricing their stocks. In April, the car rental company Zipcar sold its shares at \$18 — a couple of dollars above its expected range. Zipcar currently trades at \$25.

About 30 percent of offerings have priced above expectations so far this year, according to Renaissance Capital. In 2010, only 12 percent did the same.

"Last year, we had a market where investors had been in the driver's seat," said Kathleen S. Smith, a principal at Renaissance. "Power is shifting, while investors are still driving, it's a better market for issuers."

Some companies are being overly ambitious about pricing, as their stocks quickly give up their first-day gains. An index that tracks the performance of companies after their IPO has risen just 2 percent this year. Benchmarks like the S&P 500 and the Russell 3000 index, which measures the performance of the 3,000 largest American companies, have

gained 6 percent.

On Thursday, China-based NetQ-in, a mobile security services company, went public on the New York Stock Exchange, pricing at \$11.50 a share, the top of its range. On the first day of trading, the stock fell 19 percent to close at \$9.30.

"We're not really concerned about stock prices today or tomorrow," said NetQin's chief financial officer, Suhai Ji. He said he was more focused on the strategic value of going public, including the cachet of a listing on the NYSE and building a platform for partnerships in the United States.

Internet plays are giving analysts the most pause. Amid the rise of Facebook, technology startups are beating a path to the public markets, looking to cash in early while investors still have Silicon Valley fever.

Several social media startups, valued in the multibillion-dollar range, are preparing to go public. The professional social network LinkedIn, which is trading at a \$2 billion-plus valuation in the secondary markets,

filed for its IPO in January. Groupon, a popular social shopping site, is said to be in talks with bankers as it prepares for an offering later this year.

But the fervor has some analysts worried that valuations are becoming unhinged from fundamentals.

On Wednesday, Renren, often described as the Facebook of China, rose 29 percent on its first day of trading. The social networking site, which lost money last year, is now worth \$6.6 billion, some 86 times last year's revenue.

At that level, the Chinese social networking site is trading at a premium to its much larger and more profitable counterpart in the United States. The privately held Facebook, whose revenue hit \$2 billion last year, is trading at 40 times sales on a secondary exchange. The Internet search giant Google trades at six times in the public markets.

"I don't know about some of these valuations," said Peter Falvey, a managing director at Morgan Keegan. "People are getting really excited, but it could end badly at some point."



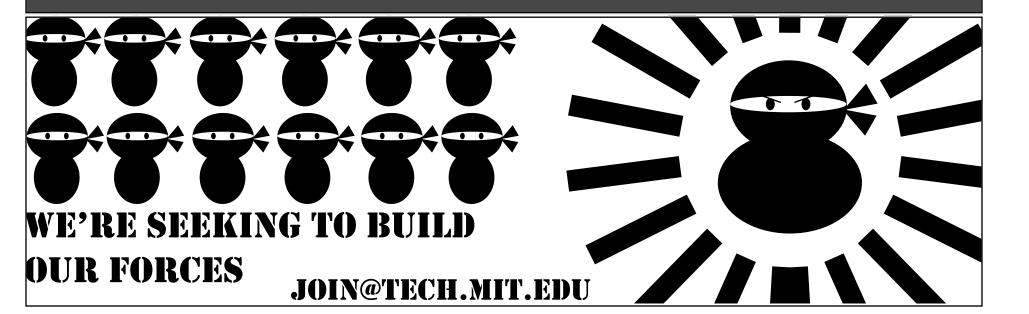
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MIT Entrepreneurship



MIT Men's Tennis takes the victory

Engineers finish NEWMAC tournament with record of 13-4

By David Zhu SPORTS EDITOR

The MIT Men's Tennis team played in the NEWMAC tournament last weekend, hosting



quick victory, getting six wins in the best-of-nine matchup in just 73 minutes. MIT opened with three doubles wins, with the teams of Ken Van Tilburg '11 and Matthew T. Skalak '13, Curtis L. Wu '14 and Larry Pang '13, and Andrew C. Cooper '13 and Edwin M. Zhang '14 winning 8-3, 8-2, and 8-4, respectively.

Cooper, Pang, and Brian K. Oldfield '13 won singles matches to give the Engineers a spot decided.

In the tournament final against Coast Guard on Sunday, the Engineers once again started out with three doubles wins and needed to win only two out of six singles matches for the championship. Zhang and Pang were the first two Engineers to finish, winning 6-3, 6-0, and 6-3, 6-4, respectively.

Pang was named the Most Outstanding Player of the

W. Hagymas was named Coach of the Year. Seven MIT players were selected for the All-Conference team, on which MIT took all three doubles positions and four of the six singles spots.

With the two wins, the team is now 5-0 against conference opponents this year and improves its overall record to 13-4. Next up for the Engineers are the NCAA Regional Championships and NCAA Finals this weekend. They will also wait ed to play in the NCAA Team

SPORTS SHORT

Shotgun team finishes inaugural season

In its inaugural season, squads from the MIT Sporting Clays Association took fourth and fifth place at



the New England Clay Cup on April 16. Shooters from MIT competed in trap, a shotgun shooting discipline in which small clay discs

flying away from the shooter at 30 mph are targeted 30-40 yards downrange. Hitting the target requires identifying its trajectory, correcting for lead, aiming, and firing within 1° accuracy — all within a second. Cumulative scores are tabulated from four rounds of 25 targets.

Despite cold and windy conditions on the day of the tournament, MIT shooters excelled. Overall, MIT lead the pack of Boston area schools, beating squads from Harvard, Northeastern, and Tufts. Squads from Yale and Vermont took the first three spots overall in the tournament. Individually, Thomas M. Cervantes '11 placed third in the men's division, hitting 90/100 targets, while Elaina T. Chai '12 placed fourth in women's with a score of 74/100.

The Clay Cup concludes MIT's first season, and with one year under its belt, the club is looking forward to shoots with Vermont and Army next year and more broken targets downrange.

-Charles Lin, Team Representative

nal matches en route to their 13th straight conference title. In its semifinal against Babson Saturday, MIT secured a set to give the Engineers a spot in the final. Three other singles matches were unfinished, but MIT held leads in each match was son Saturday, MIT secured a set to give the Engineers a spot in the final. Three other singles matches were unfinished, but MIT held leads in each match was saturday, MIT secured a set to give the Engineers a spot in the final. Three other singles matches were unfinished, but MIT held leads in each match was saturday. After the tournament, we earned NEWMAC Rookie of the Year honors, and Coach David Championships. 2011 NBA Playoffs: The lay of the land

Lakers v. Mavericks, Celtics v. Heat are matchups worth watching

By Nidharshan **Anandasivam** SPORTS STAFF

As we approach the later rounds of the 2011 NBA Playoffs, the team-to-team matchups are incredibly exciting. First, the experienced Los Angeles Lakers are up against the Dallas Mavericks and their high-powered offense. With so many players gracing the stage, there's just so much to watch for: the slithering drives of the Lakers' Kobe Bryant (the Black Mamba) into the lane, the physical play of Lakers

Pau Gasol, Lamar Odom, and Andrew Bynum inside the paint on both offense and defense, the sharpshooting of the Dallas power forward Dirk Nowitzki, the brilliant passing of Jason Kidd, and the acrobatic moves and unique shooting style of Shawn Marion. This is all against the backdrop of the intense sportive atmosphere brought about by the Staples Center in Los Angeles and the American Airlines Center in Dallas.

But, the Lakers-Mavericks matchup is not the only one worth watching, as the Boston Celtics take on the Miami Heat. Miami's big three - LeBron James, Dwyane Wade, and Chris Bosh — seem to have their act together after having some trouble with the Philadelphia 76ers in the first round. However, they'll need much more than that to defeat the Celtics. The Celtics counter with their own big three plus Rajon Rondo, who has proven to be a force this year in the Playoffs, averaging around 11 assists per game and playing a vital role in the initiation of the Celtics halfcourt offense. The atmosphere

in the arenas in this series have also proven to be spectacular. The American Airlines Arena in Miami is always packed with fans in white, cheering for the "white-hot Heat." And the TD Garden in Boston, a huge sports city, has always been bustling, but it's achieved a bit more hype now that the Heat and its superstars are coming to town.

It would be difficult for any true sports fan to come up with reasons not to watch these two series as the teams fight for a spot in their respective confer-

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